
Unit 3:

Response Operations

Overview

Response operations deal with threats to life, property, health, and safety, and may proceed before a forecasted event as well as after an emergency or disaster event has occurred. The Response Operations mission is to:

- ☐ Save lives.
- ☐ Protect property.
- ☐ Meet basic human needs.

Local, State, and Federal responders share these responsibilities.

Local authorities:

- ☐ Provide immediate response, including warning, evacuation, fire fighting, shelter, and law enforcement.
- ☐ Establish on-scene incident management.
- ☐ Communicate requests for assistance to the State emergency management agency.

The State:

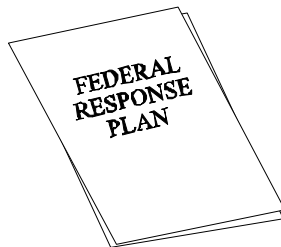
- ☐ Responds to requests from local governments.
- ☐ Commits State resources, such as the National Guard.
- ☐ Reviews local assessments to determine if requirements exceed State capabilities.
- ☐ Requests Federal assistance.

The Federal Response Plan

FEMA's role is to coordinate the delivery of Federal assistance by managing its own programs and coordinating disaster assistance from other Federal departments and agencies.

FEMA coordinates these activities using the interagency Federal response system, also called the Federal Response Plan (FRP). The FRP is applicable to:

- ☐ Natural disasters such as earthquakes, hurricanes, typhoons, tornadoes, volcanic eruptions, floods, and fires.
- ☐ Technological emergencies involving radiological or hazardous materials.
- ☐ Other incidents requiring Federal assistance under the Stafford Act.



The FRP describes the basic mechanisms and structures by which the Federal Government mobilizes resources and conducts activities to augment State and local response efforts.

The complete Federal Response Plan can be found at <http://www.fema.gov>. Click on Library, then click on Response and Recovery.

Federal support to State and local governments includes:

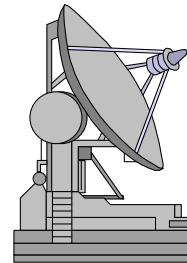
- ☐ Emergency teams
- ☐ Technical assistance
- ☐ Equipment
- ☐ Supplies
- ☐ Financial assistance
- ☐ Operating facilities

To facilitate the provision of Federal assistance, the FRP uses a functional approach to group the types of Federal assistance that a State is most likely to need under the 12 Emergency Support Functions (ESFs).

Emergency Support Functions

Each ESF is headed by a primary agency that has been selected based on its authorities, resources, and capabilities in the particular functional area. Other agencies have been designated as support agencies for one or more ESFs based on their resources and capabilities to support the functional area. The ESFs are as follows:

- ☐ ESF-1: Transportation
- ☐ ESF-2: Communications
- ☐ ESF-3: Public Works and Engineering
- ☐ ESF-4: Fire Fighting
- ☐ ESF-5: Information and Planning
- ☐ ESF-6: Mass Care
- ☐ ESF-7: Resource Support
- ☐ ESF-8: Health and Medical Services
- ☐ ESF-9: Urban Search and Rescue
- ☐ ESF-10: Hazardous Materials
- ☐ ESF-11: Food
- ☐ ESF-12: Energy



Depending on the situation, a response may require no ESF presence, some ESF involvement, or activation of most or all ESFs. When ESFs are activated, their representatives' work on emergency teams to provide needed support and services.

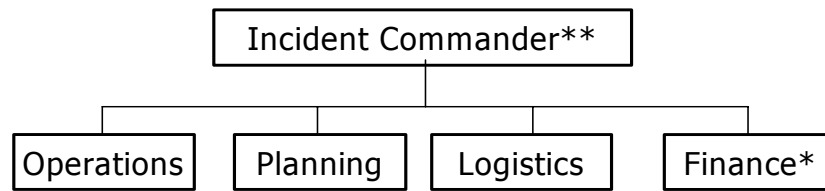
Incident Command System

Interagency emergency teams reflect the basic structure and principles of the Incident Command System (ICS).

ICS provides:

- ☐ Functional organization
- ☐ Standardized operating structures
- ☐ Organizational flexibility
- ☐ Common terminology
- ☐ Training and credentialing

The chart below shows the basic ICS structure.



* In the Federal Response Plan referred to as Administration

** ROC Director, ERT-A Team Leader, EST Director, or FCO

A self-study course, Basic Incident Command System, IS-195, provides ICS training. The website www.fema.gov/emi/is195.htm offers information about the course.

Emergency Teams

ESF representatives work as part of the Operations Section on an emergency team.

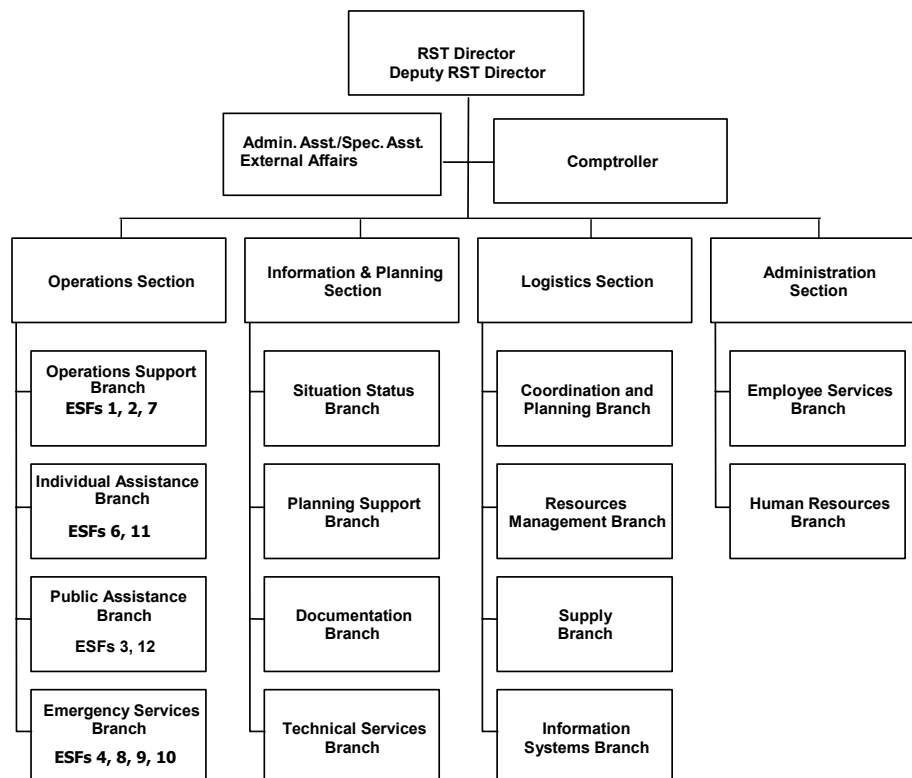
Emergency teams that may incorporate ESF representatives include:

- ☐ The Regional Support Team (RST) at the Regional Operations Center (ROC).
- ☐ The Emergency Response Team, Advance Element (ERT-A), deployed to the affected State.
- ☐ The Emergency Support Team (EST) at FEMA Headquarters.
- ☐ The Emergency Response Team (ERT) at a Disaster Field Office.
- ☐ The National Emergency Response Team (ERT-N), deployed to high-visibility, catastrophic disasters.

Regional Support Team (RST)

FEMA Regional Operations Center (ROC) staff monitor emergencies and disasters in close coordination with the States within their Region. The RST coordinates early response operations with a State, and usually is the first Federal emergency team activated to deal with a disaster situation. The ROC staff:

- ☐ Supports deployment of the Advance Element of the Emergency Response Team (ERT-A).
- ☐ Receives assessment information from the ERT-A.
- ☐ Provides operational response to requests from ERT-A.
- ☐ Coordinates with the Emergency Support Team on national-level initial response resources such as:
 - Generators
 - Plastic sheeting
 - Bottled water
 - Emergency teams (US&R Task Forces, DMATs)

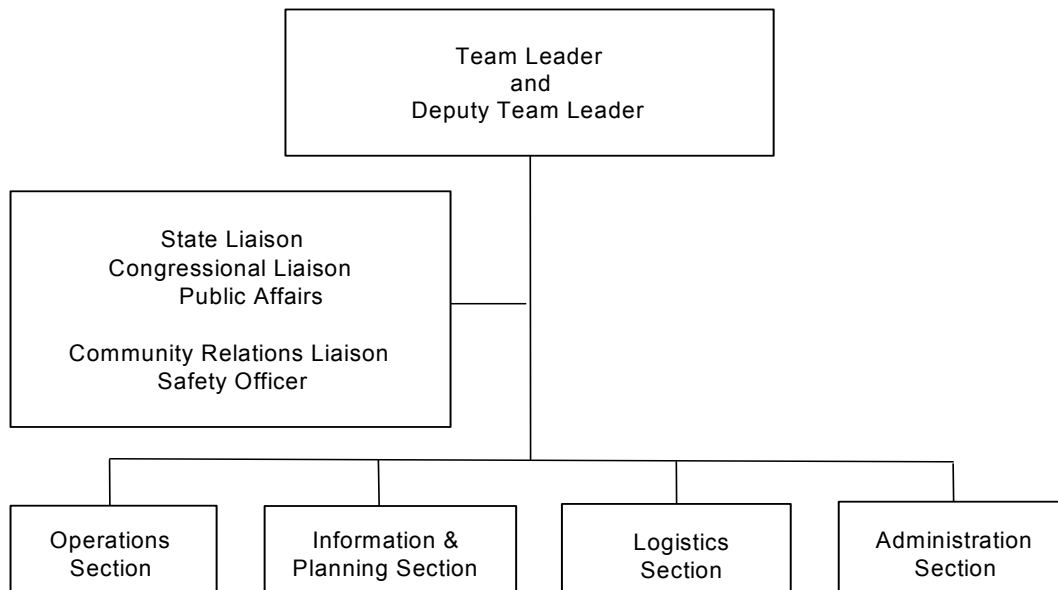


Emergency Response Team, Advance Element (ERT-A)

The ERT-A is the initial interagency Federal team that deploys to the affected State. The response functions of the ERT-A are to:

- ☐ Conduct interagency needs assessment using PDA and/or Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) teams.
- ☐ Determine unmet State needs and the level of Federal support required.
- ☐ Coordinate with ROC Staff on deployment of emergency resources.
- ☐ Locate and establish critical operating facilities (Mobilization Center, staging areas, etc.) and Disaster Field Office (DFO).

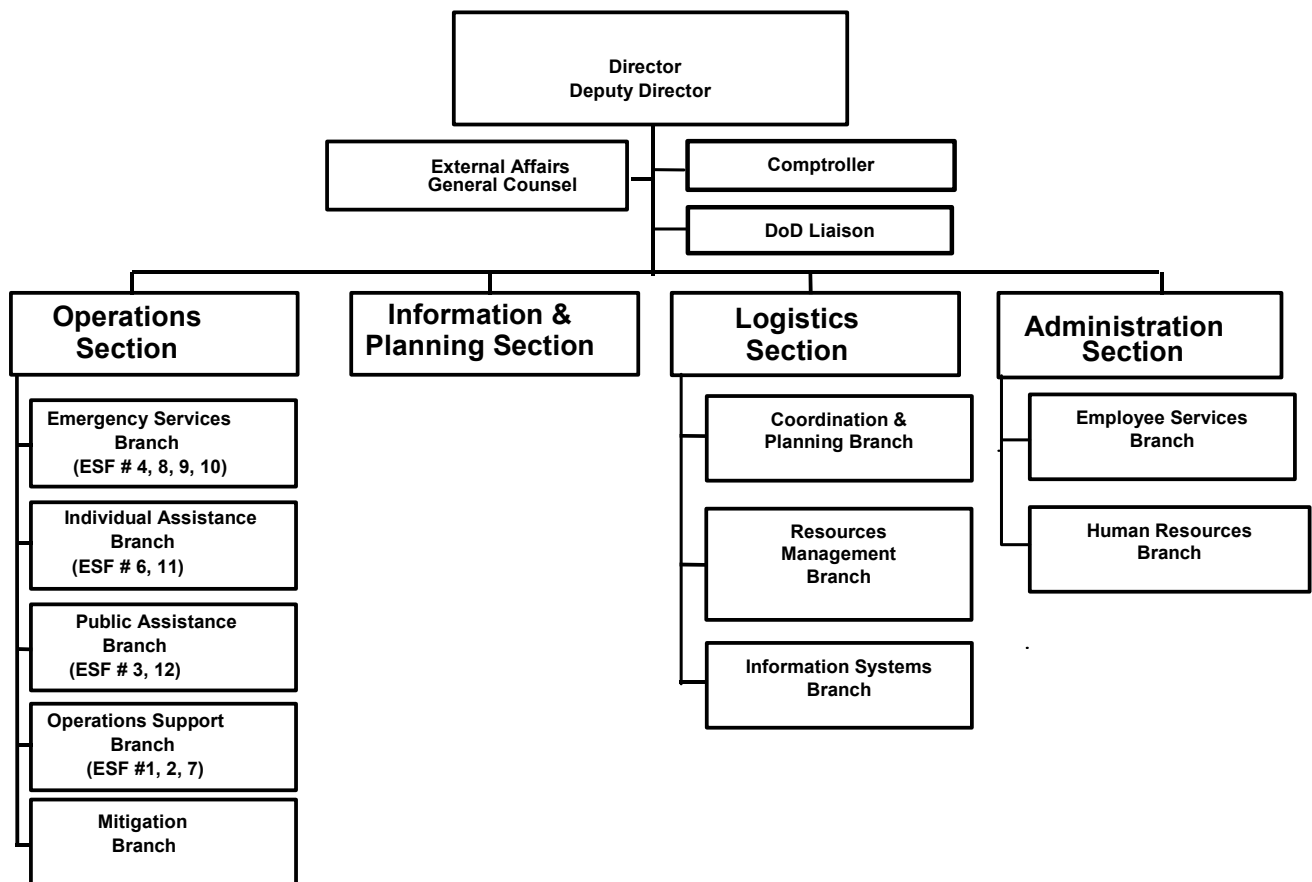
The ERT-A will expand as needed to become a full ERT after the DFO is set up.



Emergency Support Team (EST)

The EST, when activated, oversees national-level activities at FEMA. The EST mission is to support the Federal response in the field. Response functions include:

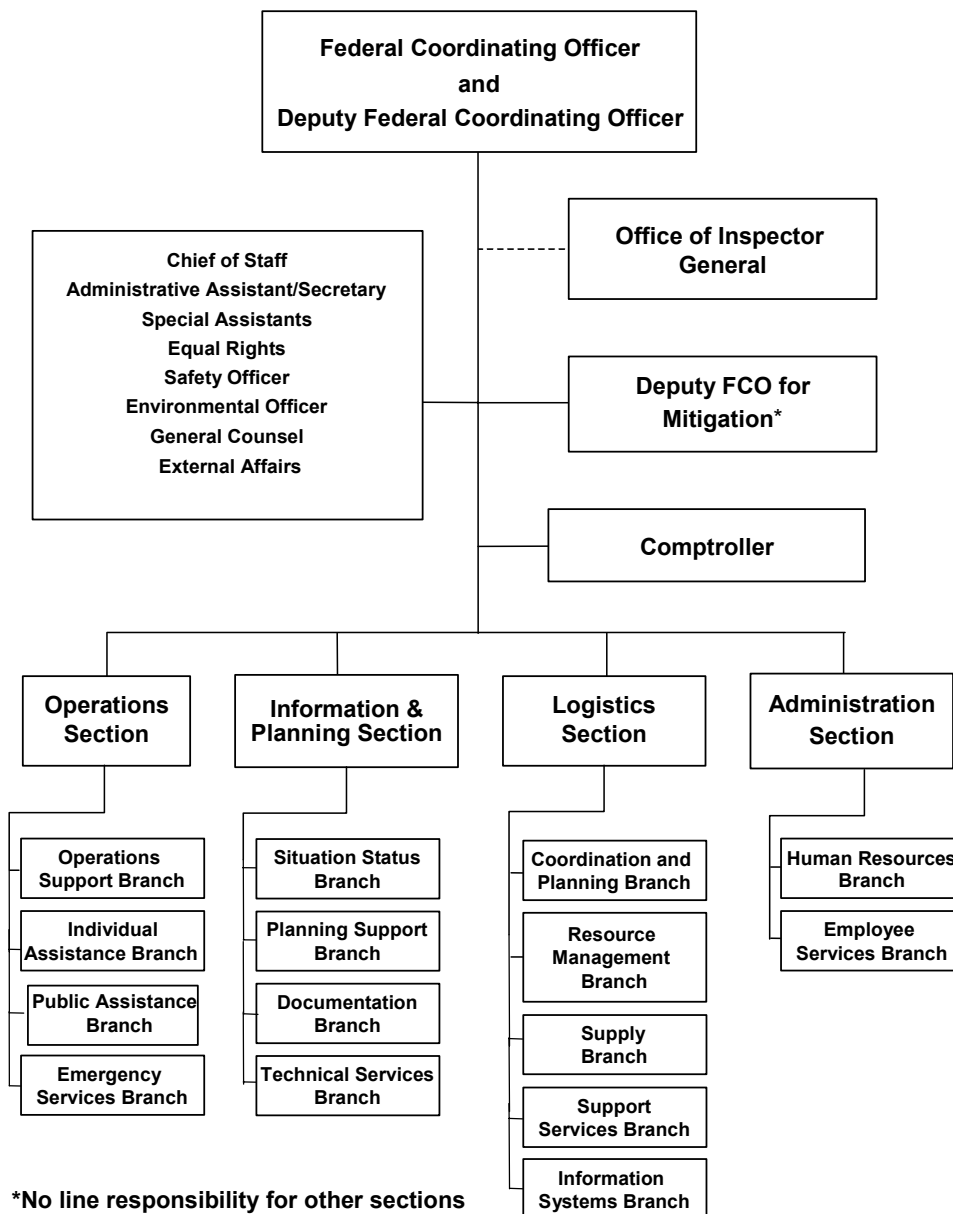
- ☐ Supporting field-level response operations.
- ☐ Coordinating multi-State/regional operations.
- ☐ Providing situation reports to the White House.
- ☐ Coordinating with the RST staff on deployment of emergency response resources.



Emergency Response Team (ERT)

The ERT is an interagency field-level response team that responds to Presidential “major disaster” or “emergency” declarations. The ERT-A, if deployed prior to a declaration, will expand to become a full ERT after a declaration. The ERT:

- ☐ Coordinates Federal response and recovery activities with the affected State.
- ☐ Is headed by the Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO).



National ERT (ERT-N)

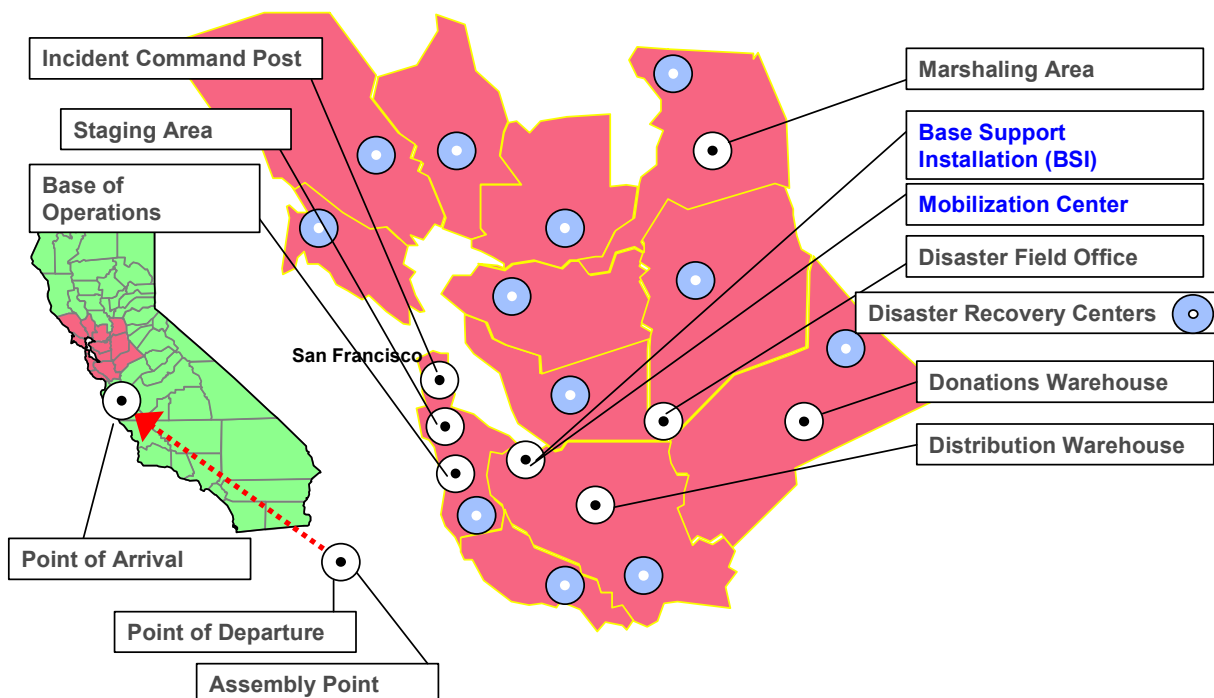
The ERT-N is FEMA's national roster of response personnel deployed to high-visibility, catastrophic disasters.

The ERT-N was established in 1994 following the Northridge Earthquake response. Use of a pre-selected team ensures appropriate staffing and quicker activation and deployment.

Three ERT-Ns are rostered (Red, White and Blue teams), with 49 rostered cadre per team.

Disaster Facilities

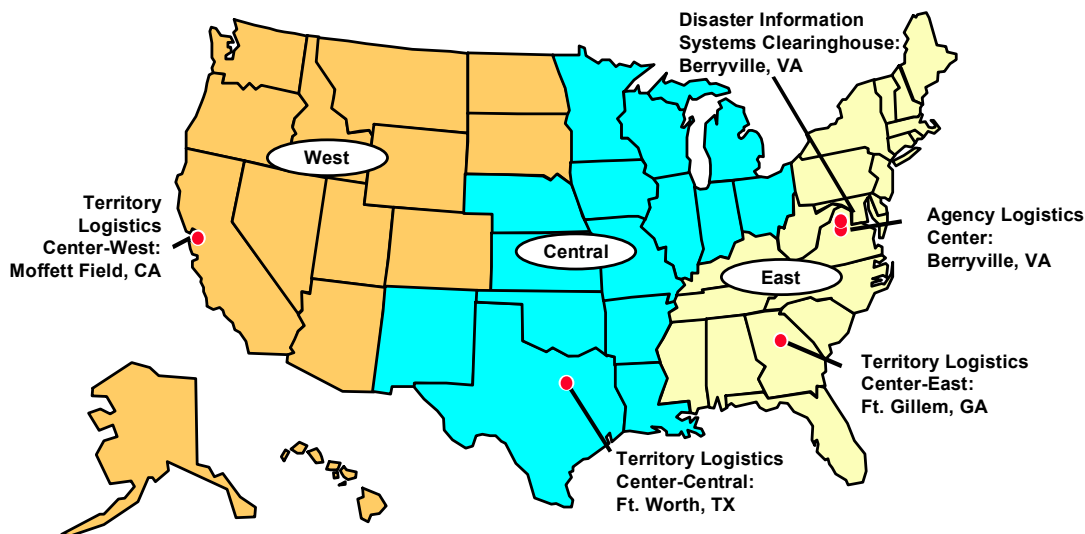
Emergency teams may utilize a number of tactical and incident facilities to position teams and resources during response operations. The Logistics function on activated emergency teams coordinates to set up and manage disaster facilities. The facilities shown in the example would be established for a major disaster.



A **Mobilization Center** is an operating facility established by emergency team Logistics staff to receive and dispatch response personnel and resources.

- ☐ Federal resources may be pre-positioned at a Mobilization Center until they are requested by the State.
- ☐ Mobilization Centers are established by FEMA, with assistance from GSA and USFS, as needed.
- ☐ An Incident Management Team (IMT) is a USFS-managed unit with primary responsibility, when tasked by FEMA, for setting up and operating Mobilization Centers.

Territorial Logistics Centers are locations where commodities, supplies, and equipment are warehoused for shipment to emergency or disaster sites when needed.



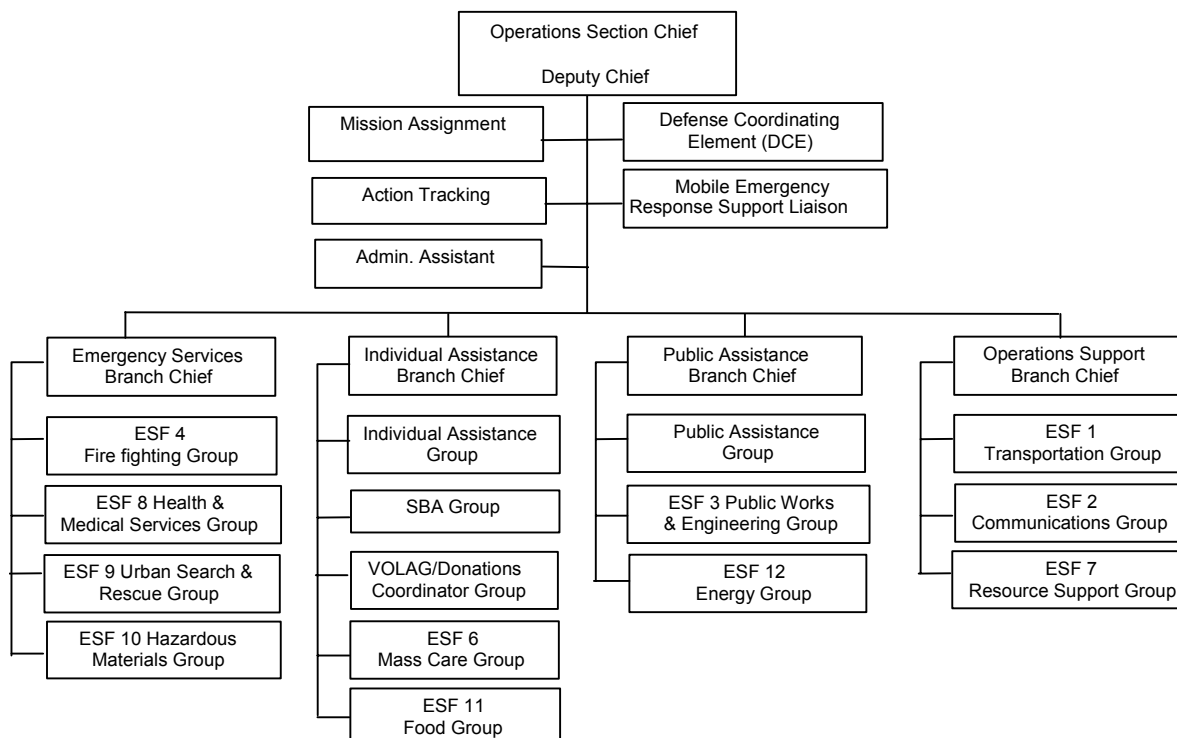
Operations Section

Each emergency team includes an Operations Section. The Operations Section directs the delivery of Federal assistance along with several recovery program groups, and is organized functionally under branches to provide a coordinated approach and ensure seamless delivery of assistance to survivors and affected States.

All ESF representatives work within the Operations Section. The Operations Section Branches coordinate activities of related ESFs, using mission assignments to assign and monitor ESF agency work. Branch Chiefs manage the ESFs in addition to FEMA programs.

The chart below shows the Operations Section organization of the ERT and the RST.

The remainder of this Response Operations unit reviews the roles of the Operations Section Chief, Mobile Emergency Response Support (MERS) Liaison, and Defense Coordinating Element (DCE), and then summarizes the functions of each branch of the Operations Section. Mission assignments will be discussed in Unit 4.



ERT/RST Operations Section

Operations Section Chief Responsibilities

The Operations Section Chief is delegated operational management authority from the FCO or other emergency team director. The Section Chief:

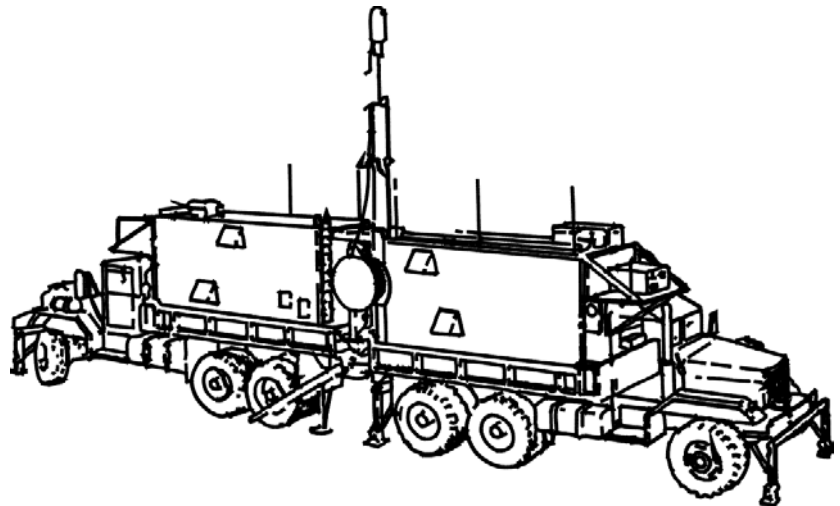
- ☐ Receives requests for Federal assistance from the State following a Presidential declaration, and coordinates the Federal response.
- ☐ Coordinates with Branch Chiefs, support staff, and Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) on accomplishment of priority missions.
- ☐ Manages the tactical response through operational taskings.
- ☐ Keeps the FCO or other emergency team director advised on overall coordination of Federal response and recovery efforts.
- ☐ Ensures close coordination with Logistics, Information and Planning, and Administration Sections.

MERS Logistics Support

MERS Logistics Support provides equipment and operations support to the DFO and other operating facilities.

Support includes:

- ☐ Power generation equipment
- ☐ Radio and satellite communications
- ☐ Water purification equipment
- ☐ Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment
- ☐ Fuel transportation and distribution



Defense Coordinating Officer/DOD Element

The Department of Defense (DOD) is a support agency to all ESFs that offers a wide range of support capabilities, including:

- ☐ Personnel
- ☐ Facilities
- ☐ Goods and equipment
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Technical expertise

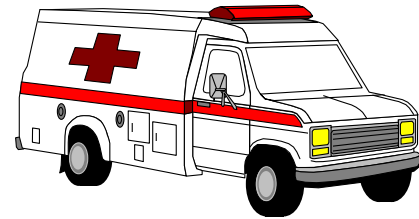
DOD can perform missions under its own authority, which is **immediate response** to save lives, prevent human suffering, and prevent great property damage.

- ☐ The Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO) is a senior officer appointed to coordinate military support to civil authorities during a disaster.
- ☐ The Defense Coordinating Element (DCE) consists of temporary staff who are located in the Operations Section to support the DCO.
- ☐ All field requests for military support are coordinated through the DCE and approved by the DCO.
- ☐ A Base Support Installation (BSI) is a nearby military base designated by DOD to provide support to disaster operations through the DCO.

Emergency Services Branch

The Emergency Services Branch responds to immediate threats to life and property by providing services in:

- ☐ Fire fighting
- ☐ Hazardous materials response
- ☐ Search and rescue
- ☐ Emergency medical care



The Emergency Services Branch includes ESFs 4, 8, 9 and 10.



Fire Fighting (ESF-4)

USDA, U.S. Forest Service, leads fire Fighting.

- ☐ National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) coordinates capabilities for fire fighting on Federal lands.
- ☐ ESF-4 can support State/local fire fighting organizations by:
 - Providing logistical support
 - Identifying available fire fighting assets
 - Managing Federal wildfire suppression activities

Hazardous Materials Response (ESF-10)

Hazardous Materials Response provides support in response to actual or potential discharge and/or release of hazardous materials following a disaster.

ESF-10 (EPA) coordinates efforts to identify and prioritize requests for hazardous materials response assistance. It is supported by DOT, DOE, NRC, DHHS, and other agencies.

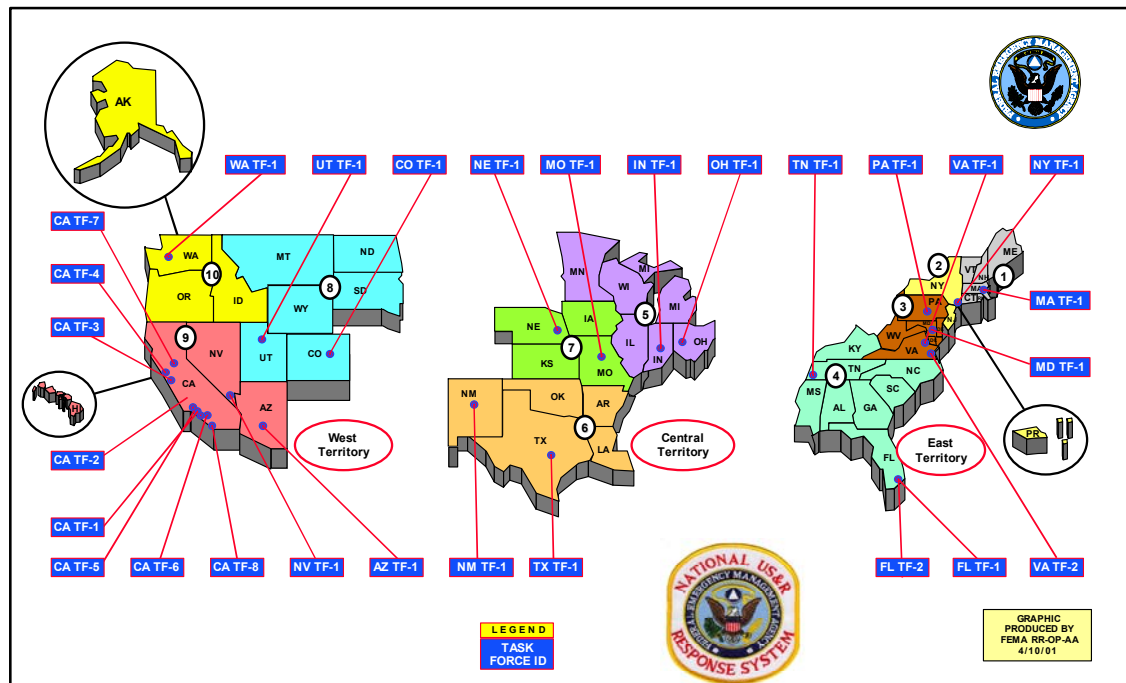
Urban Search and Rescue (ESF-9)

The National Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Response System includes Task Forces, Incident Support Team, and technical specialists.

US&R's purpose is to supplement State and local resources in locating, medically stabilizing, and extricating individuals trapped as a result of structural collapse due to:

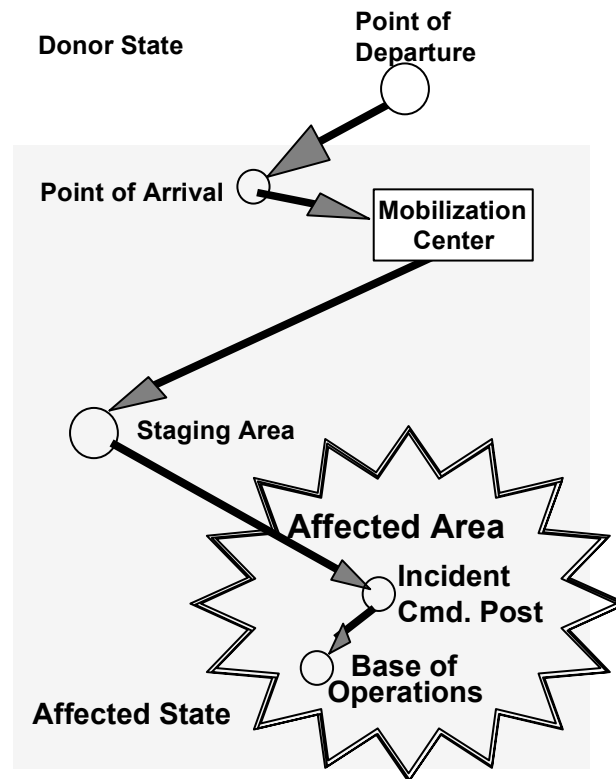
- ☐ Earthquakes
- ☐ Hurricanes
- ☐ Explosions
- ☐ Tornadoes
- ☐ Other possible events causing structural collapses

National Urban Search & Rescue Response System



US&R Response System: Sequence of Operations

- ☐ At Staging Area: Receive site assignment, transport to site.
- ☐ At site: Contact local Incident Commander, receive detailed briefing.
- ☐ Establish Base of Operations (BoO).
- ☐ Receive tactical assignment and begin onsite operations under local Incident Commander.



Health and Medical Care (ESF-8)

Health and Medical Care provides assistance to supplement State and local resources for public health and medical care needs during a disaster.

- ☐ The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)/U.S. Public Health Service tasks a Crisis Action Team and activates the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) as needed to provide health and medical care assistance.

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- ❑ Health and Medical Care services receive support from:
 - U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
 - Department of Defense (DOD)
 - Department of Justice (DOJ)
 - Department of Transportation (DOT)
 - Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
 - Agency for International Development (AID)
 - American Red Cross
 - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
 - FEMA
 - General Services Administration (GSA)
 - National Communication System (NCS)
 - U.S. Postal Service (USPS)

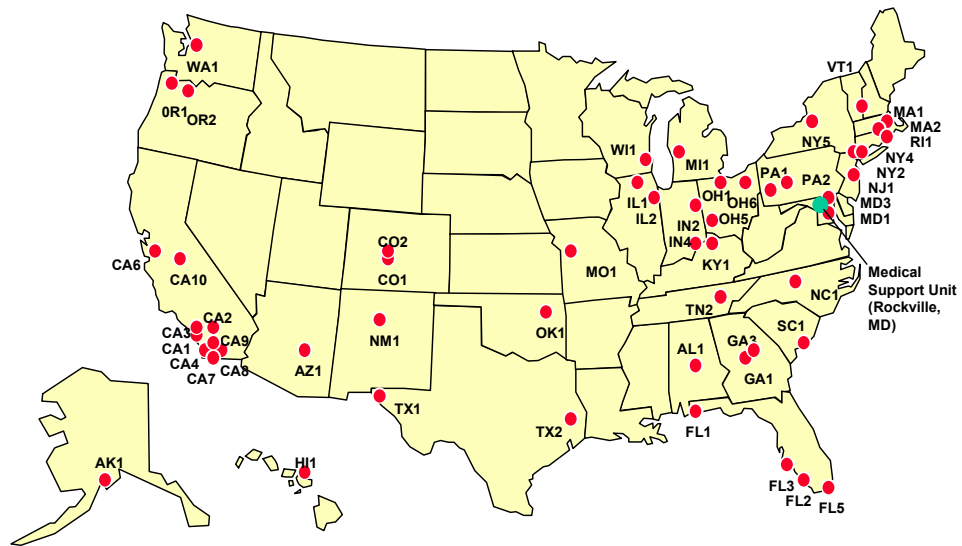
 - ❑ A Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) is a deployable unit of 35 physicians, nurses, technicians, equipment, and supplies for austere medical care. The parent agency is the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS).

 - ❑ A Management Support Unit (MSU) manages field health and medical resources of deployed DMATs. The parent agency is USPHS.

 - ❑ A Disaster Mortuary Assistance Team (DMORT) provides a temporary morgue facility, victim identification, processing, preparation, and disposal of remains. The parent agency is USPHS.

 - ❑ A Metro Medical Strike Team (MMST) provides assistance in the medical treatment/management of chemical, biological, or nuclear incidents resulting from deliberate or accidental acts. The parent agency is USPHS.

Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMATs)



Individual Assistance Branch

The Individual Assistance Branch provides life-sustaining and humanitarian needs, including:

- ☐ Mass care, food, shelter, sanitation services and counseling.
- ☐ Recovery assistance to families and businesses.

ESFs 6 and 11, the FEMA Individual Assistance program, the Small Business Administration (SBA), and Donations provide Individual Assistance resources.

For additional Individual Assistance information, see Unit 6.

Emergency Mass Care

Emergency Mass Care includes emergency feeding, sheltering, emergency first aid, and bulk distribution of emergency relief items such as:

- ☐ Food and potable water
- ☐ Blankets and cots
- ☐ Clothing
- ☐ Household goods, comfort kits
- ☐ Infant needs

Emergency Mass Care is managed through ESF-6 (Mass Care), led by the American Red Cross and coordinated with the efforts of local governments, voluntary agencies, and community groups.

Public Assistance Branch

This branch accomplishes emergency and permanent work in:

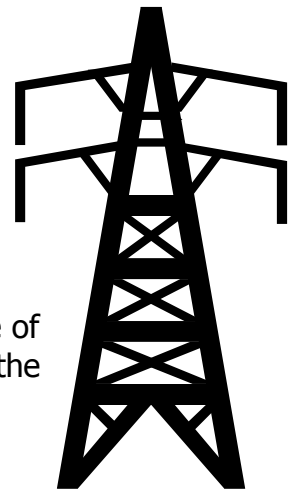
- ☐ Energy restoration
- ☐ Public works and engineering
- ☐ Emergency governmental operations
- ☐ Debris removal
- ☐ Humanitarian support (in coordination with Individual Assistance)

ESFs 3 and 12 and FEMA Public Assistance provide resources for Infrastructure Support.

Emergency Power

The Prime Power Team Technical Assessment Team is an U.S. Army Corps of Engineers unit (249th Engineer Battalion) under ESF-3 that will survey sites, determine electrical power generation support requirements, and install and recover generators. The team:

- ☐ When tasked by FEMA, will identify sources for lease or purchase of generators. Generator operation transitions to contractors after the immediate response phase.
- ☐ Coordinates with local power companies to establish power restoration schedule.
- ☐ Coordinates with State and FEMA to identify a prioritized list of key facilities and agencies.



Key facilities and agencies include:

- ☐ Life-saving/health facilities (hospitals, clinics, morgues)
- ☐ Life-sustaining facilities:
 - Water-producing facilities (wells, water treatment plants, desalination plants)
 - Sewage treatment plants
- ☐ Public infrastructure (schools, shelters, police and fire stations, government buildings)

Humanitarian Support

Humanitarian Support provides basic life-sustaining and public sanitation services in support of *mass care mission* incidental to public works.

ESF-3, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, has lead operational responsibility via mission assignment to provide:

- ☐ Ice
- ☐ Emergency potable water
- ☐ Portable toilets
- ☐ Garbage removal
- ☐ Support to shelters
- ☐ Showers
- ☐ Washers and dryers

Temporary Roofing

ESF-3 can be mission assigned for plastic roofing installation using pre-scripted mission assignments.

- ☐ Plastic sheeting is obtained through FEMA Logistics at FEMA Headquarters via the Territorial Logistics Centers (TLCs).
- ☐ Implementation requires analysis on the number of damaged homes by the Individual Assistance Branch.
- ☐ The 50 percent rule applies. Structures with 50 percent or more of the roof rafters missing will be considered beyond repair.

Operations Support Branch

The Operations Support Branch completes missions related to:

- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Communications
- ☐ Supplies, equipment, and operating facilities

ESFs 1, 2, and 7 provide resources.

Operations Support missions require close coordination with the Logistics Section.

Emergency Transportation

The U.S. Department of Transportation heads the Emergency Transportation function. Primary support agencies are:

- ☐ FEMA Logistics
- ☐ USFS
- ☐ DOD
- ☐ GSA

The Emergency Transportation function coordinates and acquires Federal and civil transportation for **all** Federal response operations. The function:

- ☐ Tracks movement of resources and supplies.
- ☐ Manages the Movement Coordination Center (MCC) at FEMA Headquarters.

Communications

Telecommunications facilities may suffer widespread damage from a disaster, or a high volume of communications from all levels of government may overburden communications systems.

ESF-2, Communications, provides Federal telecommunications support to Federal, State, and local response efforts. Functional areas within ESF-2:

- ☐ Coordinate the National Telecommunications Support Plan (NTSP).
- ☐ Plan, coordinate, and manage telecommunications support for Federal organizations.

Supplies, Equipment, and Operating Facilities

ESF-7, Resources Support, provides operational assistance to help meet resource needs.

ESF-7 can provide emergency relief supplies. After a disaster, the affected area often cannot produce supplies needed for survival, such as cots, sheets, blankets, pillows, shelter tents, plastic, and paper items for mass feedings.

In addition, ESF-7 can provide:

- ☐ Space, office equipment, and office supplies.
- ☐ Telecommunications (in coordination with ESF-2).
- ☐ Contracting services.
- ☐ Transportation services (in coordination with ESF-1).
- ☐ Security services and Federal law enforcement liaison.
- ☐ Personnel required to support immediate response activities.